

Ready this week, Albert W. Aiken's "Star" Story, "Rocky Mountain Rob." Eclipsing his "Overland Kit."

NEW YORK Beadle's Saturday A POPULAR PAPER

Journal STAR FOR PLEASURE & PERTINENT

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Vol. III.

E. F. Beadle,
William Adams,
David Adams,

NEW YORK, FEBRUARY 8, 1873.

TERMS IN ADVANCE: One copy, four months, \$1.00.
One copy, one year... 3.00.
Two copies, one year... 5.00.

No. 152.

The great hero of "Overland Kit" again appears in this last and best serial of Mr. Aiken. In his new character he is, as ever, the same dashing, fearless "Kit," brave and generous as friend or foe, and defiant to the end. Rocky Mountain Rob, the reckless road-agent and daring outlaw, acts a thrilling part; and all readers of this new school of romantic wild Western life, we are confident, will pronounce it the very best story ever written. Those who have not read one of Mr. Albert W. Aiken's works, in this field, and his legion of old friends and admirers, will warmly welcome this new romance of the Land of Gold.



The road took a sudden abrupt turn to the right, and, to his dismay, the driver beheld two masked men on horseback, stationary as statues in the middle of the road.

ROCKY MOUNTAIN ROB, THE CALIFORNIA OUTLAW; OR, The Vigilantes of Humbug Bar.

BY ALBERT W. AIKEN,

Author of "Overland Kit," "Wolf Demon," "White Witch," "A Strange Girl," etc., etc.

CHAPTER I JUDGE LYNCH.

"LYNCH 'um!"

"Shoot 'em!"

"Go fur 'em!"

Discordant cries from angry men ringing out sharply on the silent mountain air.

A scorching ray of the pencil of Salvador Rosa.

A little valley through which ran a small stream; by the streamlet's bank thirty or forty rude shanties; the settlement, evidently a mining camp; the whole overshadowed by the rocky peaks of the Salmon river range.

By the bank of the creek, a huge boulder at their backs, two men.

One, an Indian, muffled up to the chin in a dirty red blanket, although the midday sun was pouring his hot beams down upon the earth.

The other, a white man, slender in stature—a decided contrast to the brawny savage at his side—in his shirt-sleeves, his coat and vest both removed, and bare-headed. He was calm, trimmings his nails with a little pearl-handled knife. A single glance at his frank, resolute face, and his hair and eyes, and any of the readers who have followed his fortunes in "Overland Kit" would recognize Dick Talbot, better known, perhaps, as "Injun Dick."

Twenty paces from the two men, Talbot and the Indian—who called himself O-wa-he, and

on whom the miners had bestowed the name of Mud-turtle, from his custom of drinking too much fire-water and sleeping off the effects of it in the nearest saloon—was a group of twenty or thirty miners, their faces white and red with rage, and brandishing various weapons in the air.

From the group of angry and excited men came the menacing cries with which our story commences.

The cries had reference to the two unarmed men who stood with their backs against the boulder.

Little cared they, though, for the hostile shots.

The Indian, with his arms folded in his blanket, gazed with a stolid face upon the excited throng.

Talbot coolly trimmed the little pink nails with a short, yellowish beard, steel-blue eyes, and hair curiously streaked black and yellow. He was known among the miners as Jim York.

The second was a tall, rawboned fellow, with long, yellow hair and sharp, peaked features, a Yankee from way-down-East, by name Denton, but more commonly called "Kangaroo," from his build.

The third, a powerfully-built man of thirty, with the oval face and antennae jaws so common to the natives of South America. What his right name was no one knew; he simply called himself Bill, and said he came from Arkansas; consequently he was generally termed "Rackensack" by all his acquaintances.

These three men did not bear the best of reputation among the settlers of the mining village known as Barrel Camp, yet at the moment that we follow the fortunes of Dick Talbot, the three were guiding the actions of the miners.

"I say, finish 'em right away!" cried York, flourishing a silver-mounted revolver.

"Yes, string 'em right up!" yelled Kangaroo, a bowie-knife a foot long, in his hand.

"Don't bother with a rope; riddle 'em full o' holes!" exclaimed Rackensack, leveling an old-fashioned Kentucky rifle menacingly at the two.

"Hain't we better have a trial?" suggested one of the miners, a little cooler than the rest of the excited throng.

The crowd was increasing every moment, as miner after miner came hurrying into town, attracted by the noise.

"What's the use of a trial, gents?" roared York, defiantly. "Judge Lynch can take care of this affair. We all know that they are guilty.

That lying Injun has stole every thing he could get his hands on ever since he came to this hyer camp."

"My good Injun," said the chief, laconically.

"You lie, you 'arnut cuss!" yelled Kangaroo.

"I ain't goin' to steal blanket—find 'um," the savage replied.

"And as for the other," continued York,

"what do we honest miners want with a sport like him in store-clothes 'round hyer? What does he do for a living? Play poker!"

A groan of disgust went up from the crowd; not really at the idea of Talbot getting his living by playing cards, but—if we analyze the motives which prompted the shout—because hardly one of the throng but had tested Dick's skill in the scientific game known as poker, and had come out the loser there.

"What do you do for a living yourself, Jim?" asked Talbot, quietly.

York's principal occupation had been card-playing ever since the town of Barrel Camp had been honored by his distinguished presence.

"And he doesn't play a square game either," continued York.

"You lie!" cried Talbot, coolly; "and if I was a free man, and had my weapons, you wouldn't dare to say it."

"Bir! Injun eat lying pale-face bimeby-something," the savage said.

"Come, gents, string us right up without judge or jury," Talbot exclaimed. "Better finish the affair, and have it off your minds. I hate about as soon die as live."

"Settle 'em at once, say!" cried York, taking a step toward Jim.

"Hold on, gentlemen! Ain't we, taking matters a little?" said a clear-toned voice.

The speaker was a youth of perhaps eighteen or twenty, who had ridden up on a fine black horse a few minutes before, and had remained on the outskirts of the crowd in conversation with one of the miners.

The crowd looked in astonishment at the new-comer.

The speaker was slender in form, and delicate in feature. His hair was glossy black, and curled in little crispy ringlets all over his head.

His face was dark, the skin bronzed by a southern sun. No trace of a beard showed itself upon the chin or lip; yet boy thought he was the firmest, resolute chink and the brightest, flaxen-barked eyes told of an iron will.

"Who asked you to interfere?" growled York, with a hostile glance directed at the young man.

"He runs the whole machine, stranger," said Talbot, sarcastically, referring to York.

"It's about time that some one else took hold, then," the stranger said, in his clear, musical voice.

"Hadn't you better mind your own business, and not stick your pick into some one else's claim?" asked Rackensack, coming to York's assistance.

"When I strike a 'lead,' I generally follow it up," replied the youth, not in the least abashed by the threatening looks of the ring-leaders of the throng. "Gentlemen, I again put the question to you. Haven't you gone a little too fast in this matter? Will you kill a couple of human beings without giving them a chance for their lives? It isn't right. True, we haven't got a court here to try these men, but what of that? Here among the mountains every man is a court in himself. Are you honest men? Can you be bought to say that right is wrong, and wrong is right? No! you have sense—you have honesty; what more do you want in a court of justice?"

"That's so!" cried one of the crowd.

"O'er-ruled!" ejaculated a second.

"Give 'em a fair trial!" said a third, and a murmur of assent went up from the throats of the brawny miners.

"Ay, fair trial, that is what I claim for these two men; only that, and nothing more," the stranger exclaimed.

"I don't see much use of a trial; we all know that they are guilty," York said, doggedly.

He did not relish being beaten by the stranger.

But the cries of dissent that came from the crowd convinced him that the trial must be had.

"Let's choose a judge and jury, and go ahead," persisted the stranger, "and as I've got myself mixed up in the affair, I'll defend the prisoners."

"Bully for you!" cried a stalwart miner, evidently pleased with the boldness of the young man.

"And while you're fixing matters here I want to have a few words with the prisoners."

"Old pards, eh?" suggested one of the crowd.

"Never saw either of them before," the stranger replied.

So, while the crowd in earnest deliberation set themselves to forming Judge Lynch's court, the young man dismounted from his horse and approached the two men whose lives were in such deadly peril.

"A tight place, old man," the stranger said, tersely.

"Yes, rather," Talbot answered, surveying the stranger with curiosity.

"Your name is Talbot, isn't it?" asked the young man abruptly.

"Yes," Dick replied, rather astonished.

"Dick Talbot?"

"Yes."

"Wasn't you at Walla Walla about a year ago?"

"Yes."

"I thought you was the same man."

"I don't remember ever having seen you there."

"That's likely."

"And yet I seldom forgot a face."

"You never saw mine before," the young man replied, carelessly; "but come to bustness; what's the trouble here?"

"Too quick with my fire-arms, that's all."

"A quarrel?"

"Yes; two of them on me they drew their weapons first and I fired into them through the skirt of my coat without taking the trouble to draw it."

"Kill 'em both, eh?" asked the young man.

"No; only one," replied the other. "Talbot replied, "I've had a bad streak of luck ever since I left Walla Walla about a year ago. It's been going from bad to worse. I wouldn't have cared for myself, stranger, but there was another, my wife; I've seen her sicken and pine away, day by day, and not un-hurried when these fellows dragged me from my shanty, they took me from beside her dead body. If it hadn't been for that, they would have never taken me living. But, I guess the things is played now; my pile of checks are gone, I'll chip in my time, I'll tell you, stranger; 'taint any use to fight against luck; the game when you find it's dead against you."

"Your wife is gone, eh?" the young stranger said, thoughtfully.

"Yes," Dick replied, and the big tears rose in the eyes of the strong man despite his efforts to keep them back.

"I am sorry for that," the stranger said, musingly.

"I wanted her to live."

Talbot looked at the young man in amazement.

"I don't understand how her life or death can concern you," he said.

"You will understand, one of these days," the young man replied, carelessly. "Do you know that I have been 'hunting' you for nearly a year?"

Dick shook his head.

"That's so. What do you suppose I want you?"

"I can't imagine."

"I want you," and the young man uttered the words coolly as though he had but asked the time of day.

"To kill me?" Dick cried, in amazement.

"Well, all you got to do is to hold your tongue and my good friends over yonder will save you the trouble."

"Oh, no! I'm going to save you from them; save you for myself. It is not your death simply that I want; you must die a death of torture, calling vainly upon heaven in mercy to end your sufferings. I'll give you another year to live, and then prepare, for I'll hunt you down and you'll seek concealment at the very end of the earth."

Talbot looked at the young stranger in utter amazement; at first he thought that he was talking with a madman, but there was no trace of the clear eyes and calm face.

"Stranger, I don't know how I have even injured you, but if I get clear of this difficulty I shall begin to think that the luck has changed, and I'll make a tough fight for you."

"This is the last chance, I should be ashamed to strike a man who made no resistance," the stranger replied. "Remember, a year from to-day I strike upon your trail, hide yourself where you please, I'll find you."

"You won't have to go far, stranger," Talbot replied, quietly. "I am not one of the kind that hides much."

"Now then, we're all ready for the trial," York exclaimed, putting an end to the conversation.

The court was formed and the lynch trial commenced. Little heed the brawny miners gave to the forms of law. All they wanted was justice.

The trial was brief, and the young stranger carried judge and jury along with him. He proved conclusively that the men who had suffered at Talbot's hands had provoked the quarrel and had first displayed weapons.

The crowd, who had been hounded on by York and his two companions to attack Talbot and the Indian, having had time to think the matter over, came to the conclusion that it wasn't no great sin for a man to protect himself if he was assailed.

The verdict of the jury was a peculiar one. "Not guilty, but the parties had better grin-grin!"

"All right, gents," Dick exclaimed; "give me back my weapons and I'll get up and dust!"

"Mud-turtle go to it!" the chief ejaculated; "no like bad white man say 'un-sell'."

Dick's coat and weapons were restored to him, and a deputation headed by the young stranger accompanied the two to the limits of the camp.

"Which way?" asked the driver.

"Bannock," said the tailor of the two savages.

The girl within the coach started when her eyes fell upon the face of the savage who had spoken. She evidently recognized him.

"Keep any horsemen with their faces kivered up with black masks on the road?" Shook asked.

The savage shook his head.

"Mud-turtle seen no white men since sun-up," the chief replied.

"I'll try the country on my way."

During the brief conversation, the Indian who had taken no part in the colloquy had watched the face of the girl closely, while apparently taking no heed of either the coach or its inmates. If the girl had recognized the savage who called himself "Mud-turtle," it was quite plain that she in turn had also been recognized.

The road now wound down into a canyon; green ledges of rock rose up on either side—so steep that even the savage's mount could not have ascended them.

"Take care of yourself, old man," said one of the crowd, good-naturedly, as Dick turned to take a last look at the camp.

"I'll try to; good-by, boy," Talbot replied, and then, followed by the Indian, he took the trail leading down the river.

The motley crowd and the young stranger returned to the village, but after giving his horse a feed, the stranger declared he must push on, as he was bound for South Pass and was in a hurry. And so, when he gave his name or business, the savior of Talbot departed.

When Barrel Camp arose the next morning it made the discovery that, during the night, the three miners known as Jim York, Kangaroo and Rackson had left without taking the trouble to bid good-by. The reason for the "levitating" was clear; they feared the vengeance of Injun Dick.

CHAPTER II.

THE CANYON VULTURES.

A FEW hours later and we sing the events related in our last chapter transmuted.

The snows have melted on the wooded sides of the Big Horn Mountains, and the spring floods have swollen the Wisdom river and poured their yellow torrents into the mighty Missouri.

From Bannock city along the banks of the river northward, following the course of the stream until it united its waters with those of the Wisdom river, ran the trail which led to the "Hunting Diggings," reported to be the richest.

At the time of which we write, the coaches from Bannock city only ran to Beaver city, situated some ten miles above the junction of the two rivers. Beyond Beaver city an Indian trail led to Bannock Bar, the largest mining camp in the Hunting Diggings, and which was some twenty miles from Beaver, following the trail which, like a huge snake, wound its way down through the canyons and up along the sides of the frowning sierras.

The coach for Beaver city from Bannock had made good time that warm spring morning, and at twelve o'clock exactly pulled up in front of Dutch John's shanty, from whence Dutch John himself came forth, and announced "dinner."

Driver and passengers alike descended from the coach.

"Mein gracious!" exclaimed John, in astonishment, when he beheld the driver; "Bob Shook!"

"Co-reer you are, Dutchy!" exclaimed the driver, cutting a pigeon-wing.

The driver was a muscular-built young fellow of twenty-five, with curling hair straying down over his shoulders in long ringlets, and a full, round, florid face adorned with a mustache and side-whiskers like in color to his curly locks. Such was Bob Shook, the Express-

rider, whose route extended from Humbung Bar to Beaver city.

"Good-mornin'! You drive mit de cooch?"

"Now you 'call' me!" the driver replied, expressively. "Sweet William was sick this morning, and as I happened to be down to Bannock on a little business, and was ready to go home, I volunteered to drive for him."

There were only three passengers for the new diggings at Humbung; the second, a Jew tradesman, who kept a general store at the "Bar"; the third was a woman.

"A young and beautiful girl."

"And yet I seldom forgot a face."

"You never saw mine before," the young man replied, carelessly; "but come to bustness; what's the trouble here?"

"Too quick with my fire-arms, that's all."

"A quarrel?"

"Yes; two of them on me they drew their weapons first and I fired into them through the skirt of my coat without taking the trouble to draw it."

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"Persevere!" repeated he; "that's a good word."

And resuming:

"You will find, beyond the wall, two bags which hold, in coin, four thousand dollars each!"

"O-ho! four thousand dollars each!" he exclaimed; and concluding his perusal:

"With this, and the provision of my will, you—"

He did not read further, but refolded the MS. and put it also in his pocket.

"Ha! this is best of all! Eight thousand dollars, eh? O-ho! an egg of gold in a nest of secrets. It's mine, just as sure as skulls are ugly! I feel it in my fingers, already! It tickles—it shines—it jingles—so smooth—bright—ha! ha! ha! Now, what more in this wonderful desk?"

And, after looking in vain for something else of importance:

"So—that's all, I guess. Enough! There goes the sun, behind the trees—it is night. Zounds! I am hungry. Let me see if Wilber Kearn keeps a meal in his larder for unexpected visitors."

Chuckling over his discoveries, he restored things to rights, and then went in search of something to eat.

He was soon regaling himself with a variety of cold tidbits, washed down by a bottle or two of excellent porter.

When he had finished, he took up the lamp, and returned to the second story, where he began his search for the money.

Having found the heart, as we have seen, he applied a finger to its point, at the bottom. It turned.

He followed the instructions; and, in a few seconds, he had forced open a square of about eighteen inches in the wall.

Sure enough, there were the bags!

Drawing these forth, he reclosed the secret receptacle, and hastened down-stairs.

Going out at the front door, he deposited the ill-gotten treasure behind a bush—just as the sound of a rapidly-approaching voice struck his ears; and—

"I thought it—ah!" fell from his lips.

When the cab halted at the end of the path which led from the lane up to the house, Onnorram was there to receive the shadowy, trembling form that alighted.

"Miss Kearn," he said, fearing she might not recognize him in the pervading gloom.

"Oh, Doctor!" she moaned—and could say no more, as a great sob rose within her, and checked further utterance.

Onnorram, while he extended the support of his arm to Zella, addressed the driver:

"Remain here, please; I want you to take me back with you. I will be ready shortly—and it'll give your horses a rest."

"All right, sir!"

The physician moved toward the house—Zella leaning heavily on his arm. And he could feel her quivering as she stepped along in silence, with her head bowed, and an occasional sob bursting from her lips.

"My dear, be strong. Try to be calm. All in a life-time, you know. You have my deepest sympathies—ahem—but now, nerve yourself—be strong."

"Oh, Doctor! is papa dead? Tell me—isn't this some false, some cruel dream?"

Entering the room where Kearn lay, he gently displaced her hand, and pointing ahead said:

"There—he—is!"

He was an apt hypocrite. While his evil mind was full of designs against this fair, pure girl, who was weighed down by such suffering, his oily manner was calculated to soothe, and his voice was emotional with seeming sympathy. Zella advanced unsteadily, to look down upon the cold, lifeless face of him who had loved and cared for her so long; and her every nerve vibrated in the misery of the moment.

"Papa!—oh, papa!—and, with a groan that would have melted any heart but Onnorram's, the nearly-crazed girl sank down unconscious beside the corpse.

The physician sprung forward, quickly, to raise her.

CHAPTER XXVII.

SET A THIEF TO CATCH A THIEF.

"But more, far more must yet be done."

—SCOTT.

"Deeper, deeper let us toff!"

—MONTGOMERY.

JIMMY JIGGERS looked blank, when Dan grumbled out:

"I don't see nothin', bob-head. Guess you're kinder made a mistake."

"It is in there," he said, as if he did not hear, or would not understand the other's words.

"Navy time. Clean as a plank."

"No!" Jiggers stooped forward to glance into the cavity, and then he, too, vented an exclamation:

"My!"

"Satisfied?" The giant contemplated him indefinitely.

"Sh! admonished Jimmy. "Oh! he's taken it away from here!"

"Looks mighty like it," commented Dan, with a dry accent; and he asked:

"Maybe you're dreamt, eh?"

"No—I saw it. I read it. It was here."

"Kinder gone, now, though."

"Wait! we may get it yet!"

"How!"

Jiggers went to the large, square desk, and, by means of springs, swung open the whole front, revealing an interior of deep pigeon-holes.

At the back of each pigeon-hole was a tiny drawer, locked. There was no way to get at them, apparently, unless possessing a key, and by inserting the arm into the hole—except to demolish the whole affair.

"See? Dr. Onnorram don't know that I found this out! The will's in there, if anywhere. But we can't get in, because we've got no key."

"Sure at the will's in there?" interrogated the giant, gazing studiously at the contrivance.

"Yes; it must be."

"An' you ain't got no key?"

"No."

"Well, you jest watch me, bob-head, an' I'll show you somethin'. I've got a key, an' I'll bust open the whole durn thing!"

"You aren't going to mash it up!" exclaimed Jimmy, in perturbation; "why, he'd kill me when he found it out—I vow he would!—for he'd swear that I did it!"

"Jest you watch."

Dan went to the back of the desk.

He drew back his foot, and sent the heel of his enormous boot into the wood with a thundering crash.

Next he grasped the aperture in his fingers of iron, and ripped open a space sufficient to admit his arm.

"How's that, bob-head?"

"My! Suppose the Doctor should come in!"

"Well, if he did I'd be mighty ap' to choke 'im, that's all. Jest come an' look over all these 'ere papers—I've got to 'em."

Jiggers hastened to draw out several documents.

They were lucky in finding what they wanted at the first attempt.

"Here it is! Here it is!" he cried.

"Got the articles?"

"Yes, and—oh, look here! Here's both 'em."

"The genuine will, and the forged will!"

"Both?"

"The genuine will, and the forged will!"

"So?"

Jimmy Jiggers was, generally, too serious to smile; but he laughed aloud, and when he discovered that he held both the genuine and the forged wills.

"An' I know where Cal Mendor's heirs are, too?" chuckled Dan, after they had carefully read over the wills. "You jest stick to me, bob-head; there's a heap o' good luck in this for me—an' for you, too."

The giant soon left the house, taking the valuable documents with him.

But before he went, he and Jiggers entered into a plan to overwhelm Theophilus Onnorram—which plan will be developed shortly.

When alone, Jiggers danced and skipped about the office.

"Oho! I'm Jiggers, the drunkard, eh—Jiggers, the sot! A fool!—and a dog!—and a football! Oho! he! he! we'll see!—we'll see! So, so, my good master Doctor—no more torment for your slave, Jimmy Jiggers! We'll put you to flight! I see you running now, at full speed—with your hair on end! We'll tie a tan-pun to your leg, and set the hounds after you! You'll squeal! and you'll shout! Mercy mercy!—he! he! And your friend, the devil, will catch you at last. Oho! ho!"

He produced the liquor-flask from his pocket.

But he paused, with the nozzle of the bottle within an inch of his lips, and lowered it slowly, while a strange look settled in his ugly face.

"No, I'll not drink!" he whispered, a little huskily. "I mustn't do it. He might find out what I've done, and then, while I was drunk and helpless, he'd kill me! No, I'll keep sober—I'll keep sober."

Taking a large canvas map from the wall, he hung it over the back of the desk, to hide what Dan Cassar had done with his boot-heel.

Then he seated himself to finish the writing which so many events had delayed, and to calm himself for a meeting with his exacting employer.

Let us follow Big Dan.

He had not taken a dozen steps after leaving Onnorram's office, before he encountered two men, who halted directly in front of him.

And these were Percy and Neol.

The meeting was an accidental one, for the first cried:

"Ho! Dan Cassar, by the soul of luck!"

"We've had a long hunt for you," said Neol; and Percy added:

"Yes, by all that's tiresome! we've beat back and forth, up and down, through and through, till our backs are bunched with aching! Where have you hid yourself?—in some chimney-top? We went to the den; but—the devil anoint it—it's chock full of police."

"An' what's in the thunder's the matter? What've you been a racin' after me for? I don't owe you nothin'!"

"Well, it's just this: Queen Ruby's disbanded."

"Disbanded!"

"Broke up."

"Broke up?"

"Left us," inserted Neol.

"Left you?" The giant gazed inquiringly into the bearded visages.

"Yes, she's cut loose, and give us a big share!" We're never to recognize her, by word nor look. And she wants to see you to-night—to get rid of you, too, I wager—Neol?"

"Yes, that's it."

Big Dan was somewhat puzzled, until he learned what had transpired on the night previous, at the house of Ilda Wyn.

"She wants to see you to-night," Percy impressed upon him.

"I'll be there."

Nine o'clock in the evening.

Cassar had been loitering in the vicinity of his "den," to see if there would occur any chance for him to remove the treasure which he had stowed away in the cellar.

Shortly after sundown, the house (which had been in the possession of a police force all day, and which was examined by the authorities, without any suspicious discovery being made), was closed; and Dan heard one of the officers remark, as two of them passed very near him:

"We'll look into the thing more closely in the morning. There must be a cellar to the place, and we haven't found any way to get to it."

"Yes," thought the unsuspecting listener, "an' I'll have my traps well outer the way, before you find that 'ere cellar—blast you!"

He then started for the residence of Ilda Wyn.

Ilda Wyn and Queen Ruby had been as separate each as if they were two distinct persons—the associations of one being kept studiously from the other, according to the position for the moment occupied by her who played the two parts.

Dan had never been nearer the handsome edifice than to pass before it on the opposite side of the street.

Ringing the bell, he asked to see her.

"Who shall I say?" inquired the servant, regarding the rough-looking visitor with distrust.

"Dan Cassar," he answered, growlingly.

He was soon ushered, by Ilda's order, upstairs to the room where Hugh Winfield had been received.

The beauty was walking slowly to and fro when he entered—holding a small medallion picture in one hand, upon which her gaze was fastened.

She had not long since returned from her visit to Zella, at the boarding-house.

"Ah, Dan, is it you?"

"Yes, here I am," he said, in his grumbling way.

"I told Percy and Neol to send you here to-night, Dan. I am perplexed. I am surrounded in mystery. I would penetrate it, and perhaps I can do so with your aid. I have some questions to ask—about this medallion."

"An' I've got a big secret to spit out," he returned, with a nod.

"How's that, bob-head?"

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE TIMELY HAND.

"I tell you, hopeless grief is passionless!"

—BARRET.

" * * * * Speedy death!"

—MILTON.

ZELLA KEARN sat, sobbing, in the dimly-lighted parlor at her now lonely home.

"Before her—glancing occasionally at the drooping form, and calmly toying with his gold toothpick—Theophilus Onnorram was seated.

He was speaking thus:

"Very sad, very sad, indeed. But, you know, my dear, that these things have to happen. We're all but nothing—nothing, from the time we are born. We obey three masters—the animal impulse, the intellectual desire, the Supreme Infinite—all a concentration of mystery. Strange; much at variance with ordinary education, yet true, if you think deeply on it. When we lack passion, we can not help it; when we are robbed of those things which the mind has endeared to the heart, we must strive to bear up under the loss; and when we are cast away, we ought to be prepared.

"I do not. I hardly think he did, though—I don't know that he had any thing but this cottage, and the ground around it. Yet—and her eyes fell, as she began to reflect—"I have often wondered how we lived so comfortably, when he has had no employment for years. He never told me that he owned anything."

Onnorram was laughing inwardly. The villain!

"Very well."

"You are penniless."

"Do not speak of it."

SATURDAY JOURNAL.

Saturday Journal

Published every Monday morning at nine o'clock.

NEW YORK, FEBRUARY 8, 1873.

The SATURDAY JOURNAL is sold by all Newsdealers in the United States and in Canada. Parties unable to obtain it from a newsdealer, or those preferring to pay cash, may buy it at the following rates:

Terms to Subscribers:	
One copy, four months	\$1.00
" " " one year	3.00
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Agreeable News!

We have scheduled for early use, the following among other novelties and literary attractions for the New Year, viz.:

THE BEAUTIFUL FORGER;

OR,

The Adventures of a Young Girl.

A ROMANCE OF THE RANCHES.

BY MRS. E. F. ELLETT,
AUTHOR OF "MAGDALENE'S MARRIAGE," ETC.

CAT AND TIGER;

OR,

THE STAR OF DIAMONDS.

A TALE OF THE QUAKER CITY.

BY A. P. MORRIS, JR.,
AUTHOR OF "THE RED SCORPION," ETC., ETC.

Both, of their kind, in their authors' best vein, and sure to create a splendid impression. Mrs. Ellett seems indeed, to be renewing her fame, for this new romance from her pen places her to the front as a writer of serials. Hitherto known by her well-titled "Women of the Revolution" and works of a similar historic and personal nature, she quite amazes her friends by this new exhibition of her power as a writer in the field of fiction. "The Beautiful Forger" is a distinctively original work, in persons, incidents and place, and gives us a heightened impression of her genius. The story by Mr. Morris is of that unique caste in which the dramatic element is paramount, with a very strange and exciting story to move the intense and vivid narrative.

These two serials comprise but a taste of the good things we have secured for the new year of the SATURDAY JOURNAL, whose Spring and Summer Campaign bids fair to be a grand victory in the field of popular journalism.

Our Arm-Chair.

Chat.—Patronize a home literature. Always take your own local paper. If it is not as good as it might be, encourage it by your subscription; then you have a right to ask its publishers to improve. One of the most pleasant and certainly promising of local papers is the *People's Monthly*, of Pittsburg. Well edited and beautifully illustrated, it is swelling beyond all expectations, owing to the handsome support by advertisers. Success to all such ventures. They speak well for the city that supports them.

Well, another one of our corps of writers has "gone and done it," as the following marriage notice attests:

"At H. G. Hayward's, Niagara street, December 19th, 1872, by Rev. M. S. Hard, Pastor of Centenary M. E. Church, Mr. Charles D. Clark, of Oswego, N.Y., to Miss Matie R. Hayward, of this city (Oswego, N.Y.)"

We see no reason why Mr. Clark shouldn't participate in blisses which his fancy has so often pictured; nor do we know of any good reason why certain others of our lively young bachelor contributors shouldn't go and do likewise.

—Because Shakespeare, at eighteen, married Anne Hathaway, who was several years older, it does not follow that all other poets should go and do likewise—marry before the furze on the lip is hair, and take an old maid or widow for their life-partner. We heartily approve of reasonably early marriages, but where a mere boy, immature in both mind and body, assumes the weighty responsibility of husband, it is pretty sure to result in unhappiness, and especially so if a woman older than himself has caught the bird. Young men may take great pleasure in the society of ladies older than themselves, but they should be especially cautious in forming any love attachments with such. A woman at twenty is, comparatively, as old as a man at twenty-five, that is, if a young man would wed under the most favorable auspices, he will beware of an alliance with a person older than himself. Choose, as a mate for life, one who is your junior by several years, for such a wife will always seem young in your eyes. It is a malice-affair for a man of fifty to wed a girl of fifteen, but for a woman of fifty to wed a boy of fifteen would be monstrous indeed. We don't say with old Weller, "Beware of the Widows;" but we do most earnestly advise younger men than the widows to be exceedingly wary of them, in a matrimonial sense. All of which is respectfully submitted to the Pittsburg correspondent who wishes to know "what he'd better do."

WHAT CONSTITUTES A GENTLEMAN.

A GENTLEMAN is known not by the clothes he wears, nor by the amount of money in his pocket. Plenty of well-dressed loafers walk the streets and spend money freely. Indeed, "gentle" loafers are so numerous that we sometimes think the race of true gentlemen is dying out.

These gentle loafers are known by their combined impudence and ignorance. They smoke on the streets in the faces of ladies, without, apparently, the slightest consciousness of the gross incivility of the act. They spit on sidewalks or on the floors of cars, ferry-boats and public rooms, greatly to the disgust of every well-bred person. They

talk loud and stare ladies impertinently in the face. They not infrequently insult unprotected girls and women. They are ignorant, vain and arrogant. They are a common nuisance, a public offense, a private scandal, and well merit the detestation which is felt for them, by ladies especially. No society which admits them to its circles, no respectable woman is safe in their society, every young man is in danger of contaminated morals and manners who makes them his associates.

A true gentleman is considerate of others; is kind and helpful; is eager to assist the weak; is courteous even to the mendicants. Henry Clay was one of the truest gentlemen who ever lived. A negro bowed to him one day, when Mr. Clay at once smiled and bowed in return. "What!" said a friend walking with the great orator, "do you bow to negroes?" "Sir," said Clay, with some severity, "I never permit a negro to excel me in good manners." An Irish hod-carrier, loaded up with bricks, stood waiting before mounting the ladder for a procession of children and ladies to pass, when the "boss" bawled out from the scaffold: "You great dunce-head, what are you standing there for? Break through the line!" To the devil wid ye, ye loafer!" cried back Pat, pitching the hod and bricks from his shoulder; "do ye take me for a baste, to insult the children? Carry your own bricks, ye heathen!" and, picking up his tattered coat, the Irishman left his astonished employer. That act was the act of a gentleman.

To the young, in particular, this example of good manners is very important. Many boys are rude and uncivil without being conscious of it. They have seen their seniors do the same things, and ought not their elders to know what is proper? You may know by the boy's behavior just what the parent is. Let me tell you that little fellow is a little gentleman, it is just the same as to tell me that his father is a well-bred man, and his mother a true lady. If on the other hand, you say, "What a rude, uncivil boy," I know just what examples he has set for him at home.

And if a young man, having had good examples at home, becomes a snob and a boor, you may know to a demonstration just what his associates are; his companions are loafers, no matter what they assume to be. The snob, the swell, the fast young man, are the three degrees of conjugated impudence which inevitably culminates in a first-class nuisance.

Dear reader of the SATURDAY JOURNAL, have you ever thought over this question of true gentility? It certainly is one worthy of the most serious consideration, since it affects not only your own character and happiness, but also the happiness and rights of others. When you smoke a cigar in a public place, ask yourself the question: "Am I giving offense to any one who dislikes cigar-smoke?" When you are inconsistent, if you ever are, of others, in any way, ask the question—"How would I like to have others as rude, and uncivil to me, or to my brother or sister?" It is a great happiness to talk to the willing audience that we know is ours, and that happiness is greatly increased by the consciousness that our young friends are not of the class who are not amenable to the suggestions of experience and truth.

A PLEA.

WHILE I am busy over my manuscripts the door opens and our Biddy appears. There is evidently something she wishes to communicate to me, so, of course, I drop my pen to listen.

She thinks, as Miss Eve writes for the JOURNAL, she could get her to speak a word in behalf of the girls who live out, and show that all domestic troubles are not confined to the ladies of the house. I am very willing to oblige Biddy, because she is a good girl and most excellent help, but I make the proviso that I must use my own words and express myself in my own language.

Now, ladies, you who are forever complaining about the shortcomings of your help, don't you think you could spend your time much better by being more with your domestics and showing them exactly how you desired things should be done, than by fretting because things don't go as they ought to?

Treat your help in a kind manner; don't keep scolding at them all the time, but when they do wrong, point out their faults to them in a gentle way. Biddy don't like to be scolded any more than you do. It isn't fun to be scolded. I don't think Biddy is half so much to blame as her employer is half the time. The fact is, ladies, you don't know exactly how you want things done. Perhaps you were not brought up to work, and don't know how hard labor is, and have yet to learn that Biddy must not be expected to do things with which she is unacquainted unless you tell her how.

You make your kitchen as strange and unknown a place to you as if it were located in Senegambia, and visit it as often. If you complain of extravagance and waste being practiced there, you must check it by enforcing economy in that region, but if you see the example in the parlor and dining-room, you mustn't think it strange if it is followed in the kitchen.

You are continually finding fault with your help—carrying on a wordy war from morning until night, scolding the very life out of your Biddies, and then you wonder how they can be so cruel as to leave you when you are preparing to receive company. Don't you ever go wrong your selves? If your consciences would scold you half as much as you berate your Biddies, you'd be glad enough to give your consciences warning and leave them.

They want to dress so much, eh? Well, they'd not be human beings if they didn't. If you gave them nice and neat garments, I don't think they'd be so eager to follow the fashions. You are too apt to complain of the evils, but you don't endeavor to correct them as you should. If you leave it to some one else to do, the chances are that it will never be done. Don't talk so much against your help; talk with them.

And you are not to complain if Biddy's kitchen floor is rather soiled, when you allow your children to tramp over it with their dirty, muddy feet. You ought to keep them away, for Biddy wants her domain to be clean and neat, but she can not be expected to be sweeping every minute.

You listen to too many tales brought you about your help, told by your children, and believe it all to be Gospel truth. Do you ever stop to inquire which is in the right and which is in the wrong? Are your children always perfect and Biddy everlasting to blame?

When reformations are so much in vogue I would advise you to begin reforming your households.

Your husband wouldn't be so cross when the meat is burned, or the pudding searched, if you had seen to these things yourself, for he'd not have occasion to do so. He looks after his clerks at the store, or the workmen in the shop, and isn't it just as necessary that you should do the same with your help in the house?

If you would heed these remarks, you'd keep your Biddies with you years and years, and not be continually changing them week after week, as you are doing now. Having written this in the kindest spirit, I trust no one will take offense, for it is a subject to be thought of, and a plea that I hope you won't ignore.

EVIL LAWLESS.

Foolscap Papers.

The Yosemite Valley.

This celebrated valley has often been described, but its wonders have never been fully told; and it was a proud day in my life when the Geographical Society selected me to go and view it, and report on the possibility of bringing it East over the Pacific Road, whole or in pieces.

They informed me that I was the only reliable man they could send out there, and trust for an accurate and unbiased description of it. I acknowledged they were right.

In the beginning I must say that I failed to remove it, owing to the backwardness of the railroad company, who thought it might fall to pieces on their hands in transit; although I brought back a small piece of the south-east part of the valley in my carpet-sack, which can be seen at my house; admission, ten cents.

I had expected to find the valley out on the level plain, and was therefore greatly disappointed to find that there were mountains on each side of it. I thought if any thing that it would be a little above the surrounding country.

These mountains are so high that it is altogether impossible for you to look clear to the tops of them at a single look, and you are obliged to cast your eyes half-way, and let them rest awhile there, and then let them go on to the top. And it takes a half an hour for your eyes to make the whole journey.

When your eyes reach the tops, cast them over the surrounding country, and you will find that the United States is a good deal larger than you ever expected. The north and south poles are plainly visible from that height, and China is very legible.

If you wish to go aloft yourself, there are large eagles ready to carry you up there in baskets for the small sum of twenty-five cents (you may doubt this statement unless you are perfectly familiar with my taste for the truth—I mean about the twenty-five cents).

Cascades descend from precipices, thousands of feet high, dissolving in air before reaching the ground, forming millions of beautiful rainbows, which you can get on the spot for twenty cents a string. (Some think this is not so, but they are never higher than forty cents.)

The air is so pure that you can read your title clear in fine print two miles off, not only on the front side of the page, but on the other side also.

You can hear two persons whisper three miles off.

The valley is the seat of all the heathen mythological deities, who make it their business to make a traveler comfortable, and feel at home.

I went there aged sixty-eight years, and returned only twenty-four years old, so wonderful is the climate.

The mist that ascends the sides of the mountains is always woven in fancy patterns, and resembles the costliest Valenciennes lace; in truth, they won't allow any other kind of mist there. Every morning the mountains are regularly clothed with this mist, by a most expert tailor, and as the mountains are very high, they generally dress to the height of fashions.

Statues of the most exquisite grace, and fashioned by the cunning hand of nature, adorn the recesses in the cliffs—they are true to nature, and rising sculptors repair there to repair their art.

The valley is covered with a luxuriant growth of vegetation. The trees are quite large. Small saplings measure one hundred and fifty feet in diameter. These are the kind of trees I would prefer to have on battle-fields, on which I might contend for my country. A slab cut from one of them would make a good dinner-table, or a beautiful board for your country relations to sit around at your expense. A camp-meeting could be held in one of the hollow ones, and then there would be room enough left to rent out for a base-ball ground.

I trimmed the limb's from one of the largest, and wear it for a cane.

They are so tall that when one of them is cut down it takes seven days for it to fall, and one of the stumps would be a splendid thing for a politician to stamp any State with; indeed, it would stump anybody. No dentist could pull one of these stumps out.

One of the peculiar features of the great Yosemite is that lady visitors are obliged to ride on both sides of the horse in riding on horseback.

Sylphs, fauns and satyrs—I hope I am not saty-ical—roam about the groves and dance to soft lutes along the valley streams, and whole schools of mermaids disport themselves in the water.

Gooseberry bushes grow to amazing heights, and the berries are the size of pumpkins, and sour and prickly in proportion.

The sun stands still above the valley for several hours each day, and several moons descend at night, along with gas-lights here and there all through the vale, put up and lit by the hand of nature.

The climate is so beneficial to all systems that a pair of tight boots I wore immediately relaxed and ceased to affect me, and my watch, which had been out of order for two years, began to recuperate and started off, full of life.

Fiery dragons, hired by careful Californians, guard the entrance to the valley, and anybody who goes there to steal it will find himself in, or out of all trouble.

The walks are paved with fifty-dollar gold-pieces and silver bricks, and guarded by little imps.

Birds of glorious plumage sit on the trees and sing the very latest songs in concert—the large bullfrogs carrying the Bass.

A one-horse saloon, just started, lured the enchantment to the scene.

Eye hath not heard, and ear hath not seen such a glorious spot, and Californians only desire to go there when they die—not being anxious to go any further, which is proper.

WASHINGTON WHITEHORN.

Woman's World.

The Economics of Dress.—*The Sewing Girl of the Period—Dyeing and Scouring—How to make new dresses out of old ones—How to save several hundred dollars every year.*

It seems as if the days of reasonable dressmakers had departed forever. One thing is quite certain—there are none in New York. It is no use to buy a cheap fabric, and hope thereby to get a cheap dress. The dressmaker will charge you twice as much for making it as the first cost of the material. I am often tempted to buy dresses of those pretty, cheap striped silks, and armures, and dolaines, and alpacas, which I see so tastefully draped in the shop windows along Broadway and the avenues; but where would be the use? I am one of those unfortunate who live with a pen in my hand, or "on the go" to see some new thing, and therefore, I can neither make my own dresses, nor stay at home to overlook a cheap seamstress while she makes them for me. Therefore, as a matter of economy, I buy the best, and pay for it to be well made, at a first-class establishment.

Often I would prefer to wear something cheaper, but if I made the attempt, I could not get a dress made fit to see. There seems to be a natural aversion in the minds of dressmakers to do good work on cheap materials. But, I can tell those who can afford to make their own dresses, or stay at home to overlook a seamstress, how they can accomplish the thing.

Get a girl who goes out to work by the day and come and sew for you. You will not have to pay her more than one dollar and a half per day and her meals; and one hour to rest in the middle of the day. With a cut paper pattern and a good sewing-machine, with the help of this girl you can make your pretty silk, or armure, or foulard, in three days. The cash paid out will be just four dollars and a half, and the expense of the girl otherwise will not be more than one dollar a day; seven dollars and a half for the making of your dress. If you or the girl are "knacky," your dress will be as handsome as those Madame Adolphus charges fifteen dollars for making, and you will find that you have made your dress out of three yards

SATURDAY JOURNAL.

5

IN MEMORIAM.

BY EEBEN E. REXFORD.

Oh, winds, blow softly round about
The sleeper's peaceful slumber;
The soft winds that she breathed about
Before she left our number.
She sleeps, with folded hands, at rest;
God's quiet in her bosom;
And clasps in slumber, to her breast,
A white, immortal blossom.
She knew the blossoms and the birds,
The blue sky and the brooks,
And sung of them in tender words,
And read from nature's books.
She learned, from them, the love of God,
So deep, so grand, so sweet;
Let nature write upon the sod;
That wraps her, head to foot;
And write how true and good she was
Who sleepeth underneath
The folding covert of grass,
That sleep that men call death.

The False Widow: OR, FLORIEN REDESDALE'S FORTUNE.

BY MRS. JENNIE DAVIS BURTON,
AUTHOR OF "ADRIA, THE ADOPTED," "CECIL'S
DECEIT," "STRANGELY WED," "MADAME
DURAND'S PROTEGES," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER X.

NEW YEAR'S EVE AGAIN.

ANOTHER New Year's Eve—New Year's Eve and the night of Florien's coming out party.

A stately mansion, one of an imposing block in an "up town" square, seeming all glare of light from roof to basement, and filled with a perfumed, fluttering throng.

Mrs. Redesdale, in severe black velvet and marabout feathers, took the arm of a gentleman in waiting and moved away from the post where she had been receiving, to mingle with the guests.

The band, stationed away in some flower-draped nook, struck up a lively prelude, and the interval was occupied by the shaking out of filmy skirts, as one after another of the young couples took a position on the floor, and the chief amusement of the evening—dancing—had begun.

Florien, the bright particular star of the occasion—the belle of the coming season—led the German with Walter Lynne. Walter Lynne, the man of her choice, the straight, slender, fair-haired, comely young gentleman, with dimple-dotted chin and blonde complexion—the man whose ring circled her finger under the supple fit of her white kid glove—the man to whom she had resigned the power to rule her destiny, to be arbiter of her fate.

They met to-night for the first time in eighteen months.

Florien was home from school for just two weeks. Mrs. Redesdale had herself made a flying trip to the Academy, and brought her step-daughter home in triumph. She had lived in strict seclusion during these months, very faithful apparently to the memory of the dear departed, very conscientious in endeavoring to fulfill a mother's duty toward her daughter—so faithful and so conscientious that Florien was ashamed and repentant of her first formed hasty judgment.

"She must have loved him for himself," the girl reflected. "After all she had not much to gain, nothing but her marriage settlements, since papa left all the rest to me. I ought to be grateful, I suppose, for her interest, and I will be thoughtful of her comfort."

Nothing but her marriage settlements had the new Mrs. Redesdale, but, as it chanced, no one knew to a certainty the exact amount. Some estimated fifty thousand—Judge Lessingham had a suspicion that her investments might reach a hundred thousand dollars. The sum was just twice that, but for her own reasons the widow let it appear that it was much less.

This great, grand house had been leased, it had been furnished throughout, and the retinue of servants hired at Florrie's expense. It was her step-mother's home, freely offered and freely accepted; her step-mother had three full years in which to reign mistress here, for, until Florrie was twenty-one, she would not come into actual possession of her fortune.

Meantime she had her annual income of fifteen thousand dollars, out of which her step-mother was privately determined to secure a generous slice.

So, as the income of fifteen thousand a year was unconditionally the girl's own, it behooved the widow to maintain the most friendly terms.

Devotedly as she mourned her husband, for the sake of her husband's daughter she came out of her preferred retirement. Her grief, softened but enduring, was put aside that its shadow might not cloud the girl's bright future.

And to Florrie, life did appear to be opening before her in long, bright vista. Nominally mistress of her own actions, wealthy, beautiful, she was prepared to put the intoxicating glass of life's pleasure to her lips and drink of its sparkling depths.

Somewhat changed, and wonderfully improved in these eighteen months, Walter Lynne found her.

And he—Well, Florrie's ardor had time to cool since their first separation. She saw him now with less of that glamour her girlish adoration had thrown about him. He was of a superior level with her now, and not one of a superior order of being.

He had come early, before the throng, with the purpose of meeting his fair betrothed alone. Florrie had floated down, a bright vision, in shimmering white silk, caught here and there with clusters of moss-rosebuds, quiet, self-contained, ladylike. He owned himself very agreeably surprised. He had not expected such a transformation from the wayward, rather hoydenish little country girl of eighteen months before.

She saw a fair, handsome young man, who might have served as an admirable model for a gentleman's fashion-plate. Waiscoat of the whitest, broadcloth of the finest, French kid dancing-pumps, neat and small, gloves the palest lilac, hair and whiskers a *la mode*—she saw all these at a glance.

He had not time for more than two well-turned sentences of welcome greeting; somebody else came early too; Mrs. Redesdale rustled in to take up her position, and the tide poured in steadily for a couple of hours.

Now as they came together in the evolutions of the dance, he made the most of the time allowed him by the music to utter those rapturous nothings which convey so much from lover's tongue to lover's ear.

Florrie listened and smiled, well pleased to find how faithful he had been—how constantly thoughts of her had lingered with him.

Of course she expected it. What young lady who puts on a brothel ring at sweet sixteen ever imagines anything else? Yes, Mr. Walter Lynne had doubtless been very devotedly constant to his absent school-girl lady-love, and he was very unexceptionably dainty in her eyes to-night.

Unacknowledged, away down in the secret depths of her heart, there was a little tremor of disappointment. He was too unexceptionably proper—cut too fairy off the same piece of cloth with all the rest of these young men of pretension and fashion surrounding her. Here under the gaslight, he lacked that heroic element which her uncultivated girl's vision had endowed him with.

She did not think of being dissatisfied with her choice—it had not come to that yet. She supposed the romance of first love always did wear off after a little. She had seen engaged young ladies from afar before now, and wondered how they could be absorbed in parties and costumes, shopping and dress-fitting, with handsome lovers who existed in the light of their smiles, awaiting disconsolate their turn in the fair one's regards. She began to understand it now.

Of course the bridegroom that was to be some day was a central fixture, but all the surrounding mist of silken robes and entrancing coiffures and enjoyable pastimes which went to make up the fleeting pleasures of the hour, were not certain fixtures, and they exerted all the fascinations which elusive delights possess—dancing before like a will-o'-the-wisp which the hand is stretched forth to grasp, and behold! it is away again.

But Florrie was not lending her thoughts to metaphor. She was warming with the excitement of the dance, and thrilling with the novel pleasurable sensation of finding herself the heroine of the hour—the belle of the ball.

Geraldine Lessingham was watching her narrowly, through all the many evolutions of the figure. Watching her with a little compression of the lips—a little narrowing of the eyes—an intense swelling of the heart where the demon of jealousy was astir.

"Graceful and self possessed as a belle of three seasons, cool and assured at this moment as I am," was Miss Lessingham's mental comment. "And I have been building my hopes for a twelve-month on her proving crude and uniformed and out of place among us. Walter Lynne could never overlook that—for a woman to be awkward and bashful, but for ridicule and ill-natured remark. Who would have expected any thing else of a girl who was never off those New Jersey sand-stretches? Ah, well; every first engagement does not end in marriage, and it is to be hoped yours will not, Florrie Redesdale!"

She glided up when the dance was ended to say, smilingly:

"How splendidly you did it, Miss Redesdale. One would suppose you had been accustomed to dancing the German all your life."

Florrie, quick of discernment, felt the implied slight in the tone, and resented it in woman-fashion.

"You wouldn't have expected it of a simple country girl, who has run wild over the Jersey sands, Miss Lessingham, would you? I am almost surprised at myself; but I believe I have discovered my proper sphere. I assure you I enjoy it as well as if 't were the norm."

"Which means she's quite equal to the occasion, Gerry," whispered her brother in her ear as Florrie passed on. "Blood will tell—every time."

Geraldine colored and bit her lip. Her father had climbed from the lowermost rounds of the social ladder; her mother had belonged to the vulgar stratum, while the Redesdales stood high a quarter of a century ago. Miss Lessingham had all that veneration for the aristocracy—that the disgust of the *parvenu*—which the members of our free republic can indulge.

"Do you speak for yourself, Aubrey?" she asked in retort. "Has she put you down already?"

"I've not been presented, yet. Too late for the ceremonies, you see. I will, though, by Jove! She's by far the handsomest girl in the rooms."

Aubrey Lessingham sauntered away, but he had climbed from the lowermost rounds of the social ladder; her mother had belonged to the vulgar stratum, while the Redesdales stood high a quarter of a century ago. Miss Lessingham had all that veneration for the aristocracy—that the disgust of the *parvenu*—which the members of our free republic can indulge.

"How like a novel, Walter! Only I never did imagine her in dress-coat and kids. Who hinted at destroying your faith and forfeiting your true love?—not I, surely. Don't make me feel that a gushing little simploton I must have seemed in those days, and do remember that I have all the experience of eighteen months' of boarding-school existence since that. Of course I mean to abide by the promise I gave you then, but there's no need of framing it and hanging it up before me as the one rule of my walk through life. I believe I was meant to dance over the way. Shall we go back? Ah, there is some one to interrupt us. Mamma, is it not?"

It was mamma, with Aubrey Lessingham coming for his late presentation.

"What a search I've had, Florrie. My daughter, Miss Redesdale, Mr. Lessingham, Mr. Lynne, some one was asking for you—Colonel Marquestone, I think. I promised to report you in due season."

Rather reluctantly Mr. Lynne resigned his place, offering his arm to Mrs. Redesdale, a shadow clouding his face, which had come at mention of Colonel Marquestone. They stood for a moment after Aubrey had gracefully acknowledged the favor conferred upon them.

"They say you have waltzed with every dancing man in the rooms, Miss Redesdale; but I remain to complete the list. Won't you make the assertion good by a turn with me?"

She gave her silken flounces a shake and slipped her fingers within his arm, then uttered a little startled ejaculation as her carelessness was caught and held by a face looking in through a window near them.

A pale, worn face, with disheveled black hair matted about it, and glittering, sunken eyes. It vanished almost instantly into the outer darkness.

"What was it—a ghost—Mrs. Redesdale?"

"A straggler, I think. I will send Thomas to investigate the premises—I couldn't afford to have one hanging about."

"Head and heart might win, but feet—never. Faster, Walter. Oh, this is waltzing."

With her bright hair sweeping his shoulders, her slender, supple shape in the clasp of his arm, her fair face just tinged with a rosy glow, Walter Lynne thrilled with proud triumph in knowing that this radiant creature was his—his. It was a satisfaction

to know that his eye had been the first to recognize her glorious possibilities, his utterance the first to charm her ear with soft flattery of her own incomparable loveliness. He would be so proud and tender of this pearl of price—his very own.

One thing—very complacently disinterested did he feel at the moment—no one could accuse him of having sought her for her fortune. Had he not met her first—a penniless, companionless girl, down on the Jersey shore? Had he not made love to her there on the sandy beach before she had a fashionable friend or a fashionable garment—before she had seen a finishing school, or gained the *tone* which carried her proudly as the proudest of them?

Who more worthy to bear off the polished gem than he who had discovered the diamond in the rough?

What its fate might have been had it remained a rough diamond, he did not care to drag forth. Without a luster and without a sparkle, without a rich, golden setting, it might have dropped heedlessly among common pebbles for aught of him.

"Do come somewhere away from the watchfulness of all these eyes for a moment. No—not there. There are maneuvering, malicious mammas in every hall chair and window seat."

Into a great box of greenery, where a marble Nioobe dripped weeping floods into a crystal basin, and rose-wreathed arches shadowed arbor-like nooks, they drifted. The dancing was at its height, and the conservatory deserted except for them. With a sigh of blissful contentment, Florrie sunk into a seat, half concealed by the artistic disposal of tall shrubs, and branches interlacing overhead with a natural effect which spoke well for the hand which had arranged it all.

His sense of security was just the least bit in the world shaken. Suppose she should have left the old life behind her—that little hour when Cupid reigned, and the girl's promise was trustingly given along with the rest.

He had not been growing unselfish in these eighteen months past. He had made himself master of her affairs very completely, as he intended to make himself master of her at the early date which would seem consistent with the ardor of an impetuous lover.

"One can live on fifteen thousand dollars a year," had been his private reflection.

"Live at a pretty tolerable style, and keep up a pretty wife—or let the pretty wife keep me, rather. Dear little Florrie; so fond of me as was she'll esteem it a privilege, I'm sure. It'll be an easy matter to stave off duns with three hundred thousand in certain prospectus. I'll change my manner of life—I vow I will—with her tender little hand to guide the silken halter. I'll tell the sharks—confound them!—and settle down into the model of a domestic man."

For a half-minute of the time the atmosphere of approving self-conplacency was stirred by a doubt, as he awaited her response.

"That? oh, it was a foretaste, I suppose. You couldn't expect a cleft in the cliff, and one adoring young man to compare with a lighted ball-room and a dozen, could you?"

"Deuce take them all! begging your pardon, Miss Redesdale."

"What did you say, Mr. Lynne?"

The long lashes went up and the hazel eyes met his with very cool questioning. Surely this was any thing but an auspicious renewal of his wooing.

"Have you forgotten the relation we sustained down there at Beachcliff, Florrie? I have not, and I can't endure to see you smiling on all the young puppies in the room with as much favor as you vouchsafe to me. Are you going to destroy my faith in woman's truth by letting my true love pay the forfeit of their meaningless gallantries? Has my constancy deserved this?—eh, Florrie?"

He must have the weight off his mind. Very much aggrieved he felt at the temerity of this dozen others ready to pay her court with the same degree of noble sentiment that had prompted him. He must know at once if there was any chance of her throwing him over at the last.

Florrie laughed, with a tinge of her old irrepressible glee.

"How like a novel, Walter! Only I never did imagine her in dress-coat and kids. Who hinted at destroying your faith and forfeiting your true love?—not I, surely. Don't make me feel that a gushing little simploton I must have seemed in those days, and do remember that I have all the experience of eighteen months' of boarding-school existence since that. Of course I mean to abide by the promise I gave you then, but there's no need of framing it and hanging it up before me as the one rule of my walk through life. I believe I was meant to dance over the way. Shall we go back? Ah, there is some one to interrupt us. Mamma, is it not?"

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"Poor man!" said Florrie, compassionately. "Let Thomas take him into the servants' hall to warm himself, mamma. Think of any one being out this bitter night! I almost thought the face had a familiar look, though so haggard and worn."

"Some poor lonely wight,
Shelterless, homeless quite—"

hummed Aubrey. "Your sentiments of hospitality do you honor, Miss Redesdale, but we are losing that glorious Strauss' waltz in discussing the poor wretch."

CHAPTER XI.

BEHIND THE SCENES.

MRS. REDESDALE saw her step-daughter emerge from the conservatory on young Lessingham's arm, and two minutes afterward was herself back in that bower of verdure, bloom and warmth, while without the stars glimmered down coldly through the bitter air of the winter night.

She hurried down an aisle where a door opened upon a side veranda overlooking the street. She was without wraps of any kind, but the frosty chill which met her with the opening door scarcely caused a shiver. She paused, with a searching glance about her, which described the object of her search. A man leaning against a tree-box at a little distance, had his face turned toward the lighted windows. The shadow wrapped him about, obscuring his features, leaving his figure indistinct, but it was doubtless the straggler whose face for one moment had been outlined against the conservatory window.

She glided noiselessly down the steps and laid her hand upon his arm.

"Louis, is it you

time carried with me the wheezy old organ, which had been preserved and stored away at my request. As might be expected, I fell in with theatrical people. I took lessons at scene-painting, and finding that I really had some talent, got admission to a studio where I could study the works of noted artists, and the proprietor, who was an eccentric genius, gave me some valuable hints and found me some notable patrons, so I rose to my enviable position of landscape artist. Just as I attained it, you—whom I had lost sight of for years—turned up like the fairy godmother of a children's tale.

"You have been in Australia, you say. My step-papa had the bad taste to die there, and with your usual economy of time, you had hastened to replace him. But Australia must be a poor land for matrimonial investments; the third husband also dies, before the term of your bride-hood has expired."

"This time you are left in a responsible position. The last 'dear departed' has been a man of wealth and influence. He leaves a daughter whom he has not seen since her infancy, but to whom he has willed the greater part of his wealth. With commendatory zeal you determine to act a mother's part toward the bereaved young girl. To carry out the programme more effectually, you search out the son of your early marriage, and inform him that he shall woo the beautiful heiress; win her love, gain her wealth, and—share the latter with you!"

"Go on," said Mrs. Redesdale, as he paused. "If you insist upon reviewing the whole field, pray do it as rapidly as possible. You are now, unless I am very much mistaken, reaching your starting-point."

"Worthy mother, I am done—with that subject."

"Then I must really insist upon another interview. Go to some quiet hotel to-night, and I will send you the means to make yourself presentable. Take time—a week if need be—to recover from the effects of your late imprudence. Then come, and I think, with my influence exerted, you may yet carry off the prize."

She made a motion to reach the door, but he rose to throw himself directly in her way.

"Mother, wait. There is more which you *must* hear. You will have to give up your scheme—your hope of marrying Florien and me. I went up the Hudson at your request; I succeeded in meeting Miss Redesdale, but she was not alone; she had with her one of her school-girl friends. Afterward I gained admittance to the school as teacher of landscape-drawing, and I loved—not Florien, but her friend.

"Mother, if there is such a thing as affection—*only* in that hard heart of yours, don't turn from me now. I am wedded to the girl that I love, and this is the anniversary of our marriage-night."

He threw back his head and looked her squarely in the eyes now.

The color went out of her face, leaving it like gray stone. Only her eyes contracted until their brightness was merged in a fierce gleam.

"Who is the creature—the girl, I mean?"

There was not a trace of emotion in her voice.

"Mother, she is an angel if ever an angel lived and breathed. Poor Isa—dear little Isa! You can't help loving her if you see her once."

"An angel and an artist—happy alliance!"

"You are not angry, and I was so fearful. You will not refuse to help me and my poor little wife? She is ill; she had to endure privations she is not fit to bear. She has suffered for food and fire sometimes, is suffering now for careful attendance. Oh, my mother! when you tell me that you forgive me, that you will not turn against us, I will be the happiest man on the face of this earth."

The light that broke over his face as he spoke of his young wife fairly transfigured it. A sob rose in his throat, but he choked it down; a moisture filming his eyes left them tender and dreamy; his lips wore that sweet smile which was the reflex of happiness now.

"Who is she, I ask?"

"Her name—it was Isola Snow."

"Isola Snow!" The proud woman staggered back, and to his dying day Louis Kenyon would never forget the expression of her face. Malignant as the devilish inspiration of a fallen spirit. The wicked thought which she afterward acted upon occurred to her then, and its very evil force overpowered her for a second.

She grasped the back of a chair and steadied herself, not moving her eyes from his face.

"Isola Snow!" she repeated, almost in a whisper. "Where is she now, this wife of yours?"

"In an old fishwoman's cabin down on the Jersey coast. I did some sketching there, but we were miserably poor and I could make but little. Isola fell ill there, and I was left no choice at last but to come to you. If you will help me now, I will some day repay all the expense you incur. I shall work for her sake as I have never worked before, and I must—shall succeed."

She glanced at him—his haggard face so lighted now, his disheveled hair, his threadbare, soiled, disordered clothes.

He understood her and colored with shame.

"I didn't mean to give way to temptation," said he, humbly. "It is the first time for more than a year, and my only excuse is the agony of apprehension. I was suffering. It is unmanly to confess it, but I feared to meet you, *ma mere*. But you will help me?"

Very humbly, very pleadingly, very earnestly, were the last words spoken.

Mrs. Redesdale did not answer for a moment. She put up her hand to shade her eyes and studied his face.

"If you will go to some quiet place and recruit yourself, I will go down to the coast sometime during the week and have her removed and cared for."

"You will?" Such concession was more than he had hoped, his delight was almost incredulity. "I have been unjust to you in thought, mother, but if you do it I will bless you forever. Only, I should like to take the good news."

"If I am bountiful you must let me be so in my own manner. Isola Snow, you said. I think I knew her—parent. No. 53 of the Foundling Hospital, a female child, name unknown, adopted by Mrs. Isola Snow, Widow."

"Oh!" with a gasp. "You know that—do you know more?"

"Ask no questions. Can't you be contented now?"

"More than that—happy and grateful."

A little later, Mrs. Redesdale went back to her guests, unruffled and complacent as though she had not just passed through a trying scene.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 149.)

A Strange Girl: A NEW ENGLAND LOVE STORY.

BY ALBERT W. AIKEN.
AUTHOR OF "THE WOLF DEMON," "OVERLAND KIT," "RED MAZEPPA," "ACE OF SPADES," "HEART OF FIRE," "WITCHES OF NEW YORK," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE PICNIC.

The morning of July Fourth came bright and beautiful. As it was a holiday, and the mills were all closed, a picnic had been gotten up, and about eight o'clock it started for the sea-shore.

All sorts and kinds of vehicles, from an omnibus down to a hay wagon, had been called into action, and a motley party, full of life and fun, drove down to the beach.

As it was low tide, some of the male members of the party, headed by Jerry Gardner, proceeded to dig for clams, it being the intention to have a mammoth clam-bake.

The head-quarters of the picnic had been fixed in a small grove of stunted pines, which afforded some little shelter from the sun.

Others of the party strolled up and down the beach. Lydia, who had been persuaded to join the picnic party by Mr. Gardner, although she took but little interest in such pleasures, had wandered off by herself, and finding a secluded spot among the rocks, from which she could command a full view of the ocean, sat down, and gave herself up to reflections, which were rather sad than joyous.

Supporting her fair cheek upon her hand, she gazed out upon the broad ocean, now as calm as a sea of crystal, and watched the distant white sails which, like great sea-birds, hovered on the surface of the dark green wave.

With a soft and gentle motion the tide swelled up and down against the edges of the shelving rocks, and the dark sea-weed swayed on the surface of the tide, glistening in the sunbeams, with a free and joyous motion, as though it loved the kiss and caress of the dark ocean waves.

The girl looked down into the green, half-transparent water as it rose and fell around the jagged rocks, singing a gentle lullaby.

The sound of the swelling waves seemed to lull her unquiet soul to sweet forgetfulness.

"There is peace and rest," she murmured, as she looked down into the water's depths. "A single plunge—the waves would close over me, and I should find forgetfulness. I never understood till now the feeling which urges the poor, weak mortal to commit suicide. In the world all is trouble and strife; there in the ocean waves is rest. I do not wonder that some grow weary of their burdens sometimes and cast them aside; I would have died, too, if they had let me, but I was weak, sick, not fully conscious of what I was doing. I did not reason, but acted."

And the side of the ocean, resting on the hard rocks for full four hours, the girl remained. She was not conscious of the flight of time.

The sight of the swelling wave was a balm to her disturbed mind; the sea-breeze and the fragrant incense rising from the salty waters seemed to inspire her with new life.

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"Who is the creature—the girl, I mean?"

There was not a trace of emotion in her voice.

"Mother, she is an angel if ever an angel lived and breathed. Poor Isa—dear little Isa! You can't help loving her if you see her once."

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"You are not angry, and I was so fearful.

You will not refuse to help me and my poor little wife? She is ill; she had to endure privations she is not fit to bear. She has suffered for food and fire sometimes, is suffering now for careful attendance. Oh, my mother! when you tell me that you forgive me, that you will not turn against us, I will be the happiest man on the face of this earth."

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"Oh!" with a gasp. "You know that—do you know more?"

"Yes, I have struggled against it, but it must be."

"Lydia, you must take a sail with me this afternoon, for I have publicly said that you were going to do so. One of my friends wished the load of the boat and I refused him, pleading a prior engagement with you. If you do not go, it will give rise to vastly more gossip than if you do go," he said, gravely.

"Well, I will go then. I will enjoy the pleasure of your company one little hour longer, and then we must say good-by." The eyes of the girl were wet with tears as she uttered the words.

"I trust that you will reconsider your determination."

She shook her head mournfully. And just at that moment a party of three came over the rocks.

There was Jerry and Delia, hand in hand, and old Daddy Embden and Mrs. Gardner bringing up the rear.

"Hello! here they are, after all!" Jerry exclaimed, as he beheld the two. "The folks thought that you were lost, Sinclair!" "Oh, no," Paxton answered, pleasantly, "no trace of the painful scene through which he had just passed upon his face.

Lydia rose to her feet, but there was a tinge of color in her cheeks and a trace of moisture about her eyes which did not escape the sharp look of Delia.

Lydia adjusted the straw hat—which she had held idly in her hand—upon her head and turned to go, when Daddy Embden, who had just clambered up the flat rock upon which the party were gathered, uttered a sharp cry of alarm, and went down on the rocks all in a heap.

The little party clustered around the old captain to see what was the matter.

They loosened his necktie and splashed sea-water in his face, and in a minute or two he began to revive.

"Father hasn't been well lately," Delia explained.

"The tramp in the hot sun has been too much for the old man," Jerry whispered to Sinclair.

"He's gettin' better," Mrs. Gardner said.

Slowly the old man opened his eyes and looked into Lydia's face, bent down over him.

"Be you alive?" he asked, faintly and mysteriously.

"He don't know what he's sayin'," Mrs. Gardner said, confidently.

"This is Miss Grame, father," Delia explained.

"Grane! Grane!" he muttered, evidently in doubt.

"Yes, do you feel better now?" Lydia asked.

"Oh, yis, I'm better," he replied, slowly, his mind evidently in a fog.

Then the two men assisted him to his feet. The old sailor was fast becoming himself again.

"Did you hurt yourself, father, when you fell?" the old man asked.

"No—no," the old man replied, dubiously, as if he wasn't exactly sure of the fact.

The little party took their way back to the grove. Old Embden, though he had fully recovered his strength, seemed greatly puzzled at something, and kept muttering softly to himself as he walked along.

After the clam-bake had been served up and discussed, the party broke up into some dozen or so little groups, each bent on some particular amusement, while Sinclair and Lydia got into the sail-boat and drifted slowly out to sea.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

AT LAST.

The breeze was but a gentle zephyr, scarcely stirring the surface of the water, and the little sail-boat which held Paxton and Lydia, made but slow progress.

The tide, too, being on the flood, was against them, a fact which Sinclair noticed and remarked upon.

"We shall have to beat up against an ebb-tide when we return," he said. And looking at his watch, he was astonished to discover that it was after five.

"The afternoon has passed very rapidly," he remarked.

"Yes," Lydia answered vacantly, gazing wistfully out upon the broad ocean.

The sun had already begun to lose its power, and was sinking slowly down toward the line of the purple horizon.

Afar off in the distance, a slight breeze was rippling the surface of the water.

Paxton was at the helm, while Lydia sat a foot or so from him on the side of the boat.

The young man cast his eyes around the horizon.

"You dark cloud promises a capfull of wind," he said, pointing to a little white speck to the north-east, hardly bigger than a man's hand.

"It is a very small cloud to bring with it much wind," she observed, watching the distant speck.

"I've seen a cloud no bigger than that one at first, in an hour's time produce a gale of wind which would try the stanchness of the stoutest ship that ever swam on the ocean."

"You have been a sailor, I believe?"

"Yes; how did you know that?" he asked in some little surprise.

SATURDAY JOURNAL.

7

Half a dozen tomahawks were raised aloft to brain the trapper, but, before they could descend, he grasped the canoe by the gunwale, and tilting it from him, precipitated every warrior into the lake.

Now began a desperate struggle in the water, the young settlers coming into the fray. The savages rallied and engaged the whites without attempting to climb back into their canoe. Old Solitary again brought his iron fist into play, while the settlers with clubbed rifles ran their canoe into the midst of the combatants, and began to play right and left.

The next moment the air was filled with flying spray, savage yells, the dull, sodden sound of blows and the crashing of water; and, too, the ring and clash of steel, the shrieks of the wounded, the gasping of strangling savages, and the roar of Old Solitary's lion voice made the moment a fearful one.

The conflict lasted scarcely two minutes. The savages were defeated and driven away into the reeds, while, with a shout of triumph, Old Solitary threw himself into one of the deserted canoes, an act which required great skill and agility.

But where was Lone Heart? where were Ethel and Mildred? They were nowhere within the glade.

"Ay!" exclaimed Old Solitary, "Lone Heart, the Chippewa, has made good his escape with the wemen. Come, lads, follow me, and we'll soon find 'em—Ah, there goes the Chippewa's call now!"

Old Solitary headed the canoe westward, and entered one of the narrow trails. He was closely followed by the settlers, and in a few minutes they had cleared the forest of reeds and were coasting along the western shore.

A few minutes' journeying in this direction and the old trapper turned the prow of his canoe toward the bank, and, parting some heavy foliage before him, disappeared from sight. The young settlers followed his example, and the next instant found themselves within a dark, subterranean passage of water extending back under the bank. Guided by the dip of Old Solitary's paddles, they followed on, and on rounding a slight angle in the passage, the glow of fire burst suddenly upon their view.

It was burning on the ground where the passage led up out of the water by what seemed a pair of rude steps. It was at the head of these steps where the fire was burning, and within its light our friends saw three persons. Two of them were females, the other an Indian warrior. The former were seated near the fire, while the latter was standing near the head of the steps, his plumed head bent in the attitude of listening.

As they drew nearer the fire, our friends saw that the females were Ethel Leland and Mildred Fayville, and their companion, the Chippewa, Lone Heart.

A minute more and they had landed and joined the trio, their meeting being attended with great joy and happiness.

A few minutes later another person was added to the party.

It was Jabez Dart, detective.

CHAPTER XVIII.

A RIDE OF SUNSHINE.

From the lips of Ethel, the young hunters soon learned that Mound Prairie had not been attacked by savages up to the time of their capture, and from Jabez Dart they learned that there were no apprehensions of an attack being made. How Dart had obtained this information they were at a loss to know, for they were entirely ignorant of his having been to Mound Prairie since their separation on the east side of the lake.

During their conversation, it was noticed by more than one that Lone Heart's eyes were almost constantly gleaming, with a strange expression in their dark depths, upon the fair sad face of Ethel Leland. Ethel caught his glances more than once, but she experienced no uneasiness for she accorded his action to that open admiration so characteristic of the Indian.

After a while Old Solitary and Dart stepped aside and conversed a few minutes in an undertone. On rejoining the party, the old trapper said:

"Friends, we're not entirely safe here, for the skulking red-skins are thick as bees about this lake. Now, me and Lone Heart here, are goin' out to make a scout. We may be back in an hour and we may not, but of all you do, keep a close watch out at the mouth of the cave."

"We'll do it, Solitary," said Dart.

The old trapper and the Chippewa descended the rude steps and entered a canoe, and the next minute they were lost from view in the darkness of the watery cavern.

Burt Stanley was sent to the entrance to keep guard until they came back, while our friends in the cavern seated themselves compositely about the fire, and entered into a discussion of the dangers and troubles of the night.

Jabez Dart was unusually communicative, and when Lone Heart came in as a feature of their conversation, he said:

"I've been in this cavern before, friends. It's the home of Lone Heart, the Chippewa. He's got a snug little parlor back in one of the chambers, where he sleeps, cooks and so on. He came here about five years ago, I think, under the most trying circumstances, and thereby hangs a tale which I'll tell you just to kill time while the trapper and the Chippewa are out."

"Yes, certainly; tell it by all means," Dart said Harry Thomas, who was seated by Millie's side on the opposite side of the fire.

"Well," began Dart, assuming an attitude of ease, "about six years ago a young man, whom I will call Dick, at present, was traveling in Europe. Now Dick was a wayward youth and not altogether strictly honest. He was ambitious, and yet given to gambling and so forth. Now, Dick was in the south of Scotland, when he learned of the decease of the last of the lineal descendants of the grand old estate of—well, I will call it Bonny Lassie. Who would now inherit Bonny Lassie? was the question, for the last proprietor had died without making a will. But, upon looking over some of the family records, it was found that, some twenty years previous, a young man whom I will dub Scott, emigrated to America, being a distant relative of the house of Bonny Lassie, and so he would fall heir to the estate."

"But, who knew whether Scott was in America or Greenland? or whether he was alive at all?"

"Well, Dick, our American tourist, heard of all this hubbub about Bonny Lassie and Scott, the heir. As luck would have it, he knew exactly where Scott was in America—he was acquainted with him, and the

devil took possession of his heart, and he resolved to make a fortune out of his knowledge—if not, indeed, obtain possession of Bonny Lassie. So straightway he went to those whom the law had appointed to administer on the estate, and told them he believed he knew where Scott was, and offered to hunt him up and send him forthwith to take possession of the Bonny Lassie. Of course the apparently learned and gentlemanly American tourist was instructed with this mission.

Dick returned post-haste to America, and found that Scott and his wife were both dead, but they had a lovely daughter—who I'll call Margery—living, and who of course was next heir to Bonny Lassie. Instead of Dick telling Margery of her foreign wealth, he set to work to win her affections and marry her, so that he could share her fortune with her, and no telling what crime lurked back of this resolve.

"Ho, for the cavern, Spirit of the Monster!" shouted Wancosta's captor, "to feed your ghoul's jaws on Waucussy's flesh!"

The Monster turned, and started directly toward the mouth of the cavern where our friends were.

"Oh, it is coming here!" cried Millie, in the greatest fear.

"Let it come, Millie," replied Dart;

"the Monster of the Lake is nothing but a cowering-contracted beast. But, let us hasten back to the fire, for those aboard the Monster are our friends, and they have a prisoner."

The party turned and hastened back to the fire. They had scarcely landed when the light of the camp-fire showed them the Monster approaching along the channel, and astride of its back was Old Solitary, with Wancosta lying before him, a prisoner.

"We've got the beauty, boys," shouted the old trapper. "List step down and take charge of him. The paint's all washed from his countenance, and you'll readily recognize the critter."

Dart and two of the hunters stepped down to the water's edge, as the Monster came to the landing, and took the prisoner in charge.

No sooner did Dart's eyes fall upon his face, from which the paint had been washed, than he exclaimed:

"Yes, sir! it's my man, Hank Hohn!

Friends, this proves that the Hart's Ford murder was all a farce, and Frank Hammond is an innocent man, for here we have the supposed murderer man."

"I've known that these five years," returned Hohn, the renegade chief. Wancosta, with a defiant leer; "the captain gave me a nice sum to leave the diggin's, and comin' west, I got in among the red-skins, and got to be a big bug 'mong 'em. Now, do you want me with me, gentlemen, if you think I'm guilty of crime?"

"Never mind your gab now, Hohn; I'll tend to your case," replied Dart.

At this juncture, Ethel, who had been watching the Monster with a kind of fascination, saw its back part, as if upon hinges, and the form of Lone Heart appear from the opening.

A cry burst from her lips, and she started toward him, for now she could see that Lone Heart was her darling Frank Hammond, and—"

(To be continued—commenced in No. 147.)

Once or twice one of them fired a shot,

but their aim being taken from horseback, was hurried and uncertain compared to his own, and he was unhurt.

Wancosta heard not his words, but strove harder than ever to get into his canoe.

But the next instant the dragon ran alongside of him, a pair of strong hands

grasped the chief, lifted him from the water, and threw him across the back of the Monster, thereby rendering him perfectly helpless.

In a moment the Indians were down again and halted, while Belcourt could see them, himself unseen all but the head. A second shot from his cover killed a horse, and caused a quick retreat of the Indians to a safer distance, when a spiteful rain of bullets came skipping over the rocks all round.

"Fraulein," he said, hurriedly, "you goes mit Yakop up here, und you keeps quiet; den I keeps dese fellers below from commen up hier. You go quick."

But Clara wouldn't go. She said she didn't dare to leave him, and begged him with tears not to make her go so that Carl was compelled to allow her to stay close to him, though he grumbled fearfully at "deedle kirs vot don't got no sense, dey doesn't."

"She vant to ket killed und leave me. Well, you shall stay der. Maybe you be sorry."

He peered over the cliff, and lo! an Indian warrior was already within five yards of the top!

Carl whipped out his revolver and sternly awaited the approach of the other, ready to shoot him down the moment he should get to the edge of the platform of rock.

Clara Davis said not a word, but lay still, palpitating, while Yakop was licking her hands, just as if he was entreating her not to be afraid.

Carl drew back from the edge of the precipice now, and knelt down on one knee. An expression of great anxiety was on his face, for he was about to try a desperate experiment.

They could both hear plainly the labored breath of their foe, as he rested at a stunted bush below the edge of the platform. The sounds of panting a little way beyond announced that others were following him. The Indians seemed to have no fear of a man whom they deemed unarmed, and came steadily up, pistol in hand.

Presently the plumed scalp-lock of the first Indian showed over the edge, and in a moment more the whole face made its appearance.

As Carl Brinkerhoff started up, an expression of terror came into the savage's face. He had not expected to find the other waiting for him, and up came his hand with a revolver in it instantly.

The stalwart German stepped forward and caught the long black hair in his powerful clutch, when he blew out the savage's brains with his pistol, before a notion could be formed of his intentions.

The body would undoubtedly have fallen down the precipice, but for the firm grip of the German's left hand. As it was, he dragged it hastily over the ledge, amid a shower of bullets from below, and laid it down.

The Indian, as he had supposed, was loaded with weapons, being a chief of rank, and his rifle had been slung at his back.

"Now, you tammed t'iefs, lass mir see you commen her now," growled Carl, triumphantly, as he leaned over the edge of the precipice, careless of wasting any more shots now, and began to pick off the rash warriors who were attempting the perilous climb, ignorant of the danger.

The very first shot brought down a man, and caused such a remarkably hurried scramble down of the rest, that it seemed as if they, too, had been shot.

"D'vill do," said Carl, quietly, as he put up his pistol. "Dem don't come d'vessay no more, fraulein, so I will d'ake dis shtiemtian's arms, and we will go."

He stooped down as he spoke, and removed the arms from the dead body of the Indian chief.

Then, turning with his fair companion, they plunged into the canon and were lost to sight, just as Cochise gave some order to his men, which sent the whole of them galloping along the foot of the Sierra, searching for an opening.

(To be continued—Commenced in No. 145.)

The Rock Rider

THE SPIRIT OF THE SIERRA.

A TALE OF THE THREE PARKS.

BY FREDERICK WHITTAKER.

AUTHOR OF "THE RED RAJAH," "THE KNIGHT OF THE RUBIES," "DOUBLE-DEATH," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXIII.

A SHOOTING EXPERIMENT.

WHEN Belcourt turned round, it was with the deliberate purpose of shooting his very best. All the nervous excitement which usually disturbed his aim seemed to have vanished in the crisis. He knew well that life and death lay in his steadiness now.

Eclair walked off up the pass, carrying the girl, till a jutting rock hid them from view in the valley, and then the intelligent creature halted, and waited for his master.

Meantime Belcourt called to mind all the instructions he had received from Brinkerhoff on the subject of shooting, and knelt down on one knee to steady his aim, resting his left elbow on his knee.

At the sight of the presented rifle, the Indians halted instantaneously, and every man dodged behind his horse.

Belcourt took a steady, careful aim, but it seemed to him that the fore sight of his rifle had never trembled so much before. He knew that if he fired now, every shot must tell or be wasted.

With a coolness that did him credit, he deliberately sat down on the ground with his knees up in front, rested his elbow on the left knee, and took a fresh sight. To his great joy there was a perceptible increase of steadiness. The muzzle sight of the rifle ceased to tremble, and he felt that he could depend on his aim. It was a good lesson that he was learning in a grim school.

In the midst of the Indians was a particularly handsome spotted mustang, which he thought must be the mount of a chief, and he took a steady aim at the animal, for a lump sticking out of its side told him that an Indian was hanging there.

Crack! went the rifle, and Belcourt watched for the effect of his shot with eager anxiety.

He uttered an exclamation of exultation as the spotted mustang reared up with a squeal, wheeled round and ran away, while the dark figure of its rider fell to the earth in full view, and lay there motionless.

"I have done it at last," he muttered. "Now I know how to shoot."

But the sound of his shot had roused the Indians. With one accord they uttered a loud yell, and sprang up on their horses to make a dash up the pass. The young man hastily crammed a fresh cartridge into the breech of his rifle, and leveled it once more.

Every Indian dashed as if struck by lightning, and ducked down.

One of them fired a hasty shot, and the bullet struck the rock by Belcourt's side. It was answered by the crack of the young man's rifle, and the Indian threw up his arms and fell from his horse.

"Again!" said Belcourt, delighted. "I must be growing a famous shot."

He crammed in another cartridge, as the Indians made a fresh rush, and again they hasted to rise from the earth.

Then Belcourt rose up, confident and smiling.

"I have mastered the secret," he muttered.

"One must keep cool and attend to the sight. That is the whole science of shooting."

Slowly he retreated up the pass, halting every now and then to present his rifle and threaten the Indians, who began to follow him again at a respectful distance.

"But, who knew whether Scott was in America or Greenland? or whether he was alive at all?"

"Well, Dick, our American tourist, heard of all this hubbub about Bonny Lassie and Scott, the heir. As luck would have it, he knew exactly where Scott was in America—he was acquainted with him, and the

makes such a noise down dere. Was it to be done?"

He peeped over, and saw how slow and toilsome was the upward progress of his foes, at the same time that it was perfectly fearless. They clearly supposed him to be unarmed, save for his knife. He looked back, and saw a dark, narrow ravine a little way off, that promised to afford a ready means of escape into the mountain recesses, could he once get rid of his foes below.

"Fraulein," he said, hurriedly, "you goes mit Yakop up here, und you keeps quiet; den I keeps dese fellers below from commen up hier. You go quick."

But Clara wouldn't go. She said she didn't dare to leave him, and begged him with tears not to make her go so that Carl was compelled to allow her to stay close to him, though he grumbled fearfully at "deedle kirs vot don't got no sense, dey doesn't."

"She vant to ket killed und leave me. Well, you shall stay der. Maybe you be sorry."

He peered over the cliff, and lo! an Indian warrior was already within five yards of the top!

Carl whipped out his revolver and sternly awaited the approach of the other, ready to shoot him down the moment he should get to the edge of the platform of rock.

Clara Davis said not a word, but lay still, palpitating, while Yakop was licking her hands, just as if he was entreating her not

SATURDAY JOURNAL.

A GOOD DAY.

BY JOE JOT, JR.

I am unwilling to deny
That I was once a boy;
Some day you will acknowledge this,
But I do not wish to say,
And like all lads of seven or eight,
I was to mischief prone,
And was not very much account
For letting things alone.

There was to be a show in town;
The bills had long been up;
I'd passed them many times a day,
And every time I'd stop;
The clown had stood there on his head
For twenty days or more;
The crocodile, though swimming long,
Had never reached the shore.

The morn it came; my father said
If I would just right,
And I did so, then just one day,
He'd take me there at last;
I promised, jumped upon a chair,
And waved my hat and roared,
And did my best to save the clock,
But, oh! that clock was floored!

Out in the yard I played at ball;
I tried with might and main
To hold it back as it went straight
Into the window-pane.
I didn't mean to go to let
The cows get in the corn,
And had no knowledge of the nail
On which my pants were torn.

I did the best I could to keep
From licking brother Bill,
And had no idea at all that
The hot oil on the floor would spill.
I'm sure it wasn't purposely
I fell into the creek,
Nor ate those cakes upon the sly
Till I got very sick!

When mother sent me to the store,
I'm sure I went with hope,
But stumbled on some boys and fell
Into a game of "keeps."
I couldn't for my life see how
That rock should lame the goose,
Nor why the gate broke under me;
It must have been quite loose.

The clothes-line wasn't much account;
It was a rotten thing;
I snapt it when I only tried
To use it for a swing;
I only stepped upon its head
And broke my sister's doll;
I merely climbed the shelves, and yet,
Those dishes had to fall!

That night my father called me in
And counted up the score,
Embracing those which you have heard,
And quite a number more;
He said, "It pleases me to see
What you're improving so;
The count is short of yesterday's;
Put on your hat, let's go."

The Mad Puritan.

AN INCIDENT OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

BY LAUNCE FOYNTZ.

TOWARD the end of the civil war in England, when Charles I., a prisoner in the Tower, was awaiting his trial at the hands of the Parliament, and the remaining adherents of the king, scattered and despondent, were either returning to their homes or fleeing to the Continent, a young man, whose long curling hair and general style of dress announced him as belonging to the defeated party, checked his horse, in a wild and remote part of Wales, beneath the ruins of Chepstow Castle. The young cavalier was alone. In the wild and desolate landscape round him no other living creature was visible, save the birds on the trees, and a few squirrels.

He was a handsome young fellow, and the picturesque costume of the Cavalier set off his light and active form to great advantage. The expression of his countenance was sad and despondent, however, as it well might be, considering the theate of his party, ground down under the armed heel of Cromwell's Ironsides.

"This old ruin will afford me shelter for a night, I hope," he soliloquized, as he gazed up at the hoary ruins. "Tis an ill wind that blows no one good. Little thought the Roundheads, when they battered the old place to bits, and burned the inside out, that the time would come when a 'Malcontent' would thank them for leaving him a refuge and hiding-place. Come, Denzil Bohun, thy fortunes are low, to be sure, but who knows when the times may mend? The king shall enjoy his own again, some day, and these hypocritical Roundheads can not oppress England forever. Let us go in and inspect the place, old Roland."

He turned his horse as he spoke, and rode round the castle, seeking an entrance into the ruins. But the drawbridge had been burnt down long before, and the broad, gaping moat opposed him everywhere. At last, however, he found a place where a small covered way ascended to the surface of the ground, and riding down it, a low sallyport afforded him an entrance into the ruins, just wide enough for a single horseman.

Denzil Bohun rode into Chepstow Castle and found himself in a huge underground stable, where the knights of old that built the tower were once wont to stable their horses. He dismounted from his charger, and bestowed him for the night in one of the great stone stalls.

"Poor Roland!" he said. "Thou must even be content with grass for thy fare and stones for thy couch to-night, old horse, for there is neither corn nor straw to be had in this desolate place."

He unsaddled the horse with great care, and going outside into the moat, where the grass grew long and rank, the Cavalier drew his sword and set to work to cut a sufficiency for the supply of his animal. 'Twas a long and tedious task with a blunt sword, and many a time did the youth wish for the humbler but more efficient scythe to aid him; but at last a sufficiency was gathered, and Denzil had the pleasure of seeing the charger fall to heartily, by which time the sun was down.

Denzil Bohun noticed on the floor of the stable many old fragments of half-charred wood, and out of one of these he contrived to fashion a torch, which he lighted by the aid of his tinder-box.

Then he set out to explore the ruins, and find, if possible, a retreat for himself for the night, more comfortable than the dungeon-like stable. He passed through the whole length of the latter before finding a means of exit, and when he did, the prospect was by no means cheering.

A low arched doorway, in the Norman style of the rest of the castle, with the simple notched molding around the face of the stones known as the "dog-tooth," led into a dark corridor, into which he penetrated, not knowing whither it led.

After advancing some fifty feet, the pas-

sage terminated in a blank wall, but at the right-hand side appeared a narrow flight of stone steps, up which the adventurer mounted, winding round and round, in a manner that told him he must be in one of the flanking towers of the castle.

After a long and tedious ascent, he emerged out of a door in the once splendid central hall of the castle, where the tessellated stone pavement, founded on arches below, had defied the fire when the castle had been destroyed.

Denzil Bohun looked round with satisfaction. Of all the castle this was almost the only habitable place left. Its vaulted stone roof was still intact, when the exterior wooden roof was all gone, everywhere else.

The cavalier walked round the room in silence, exploring the means of ingress and egress. The grand doorway was a gaping void now. Its once massive iron-studded leaves lay prostrate on the pavement, partly burned and partly shattered. The stone staircase was unharmed, but it only led to the gateway below, likewise bare and open, where the drawbridge that once crossed the moat, now absent, left a black gulf between the gate and the open air.

Bolun shivered slightly, and turned away to the corner of the hall, where a flight of stone steps leading upward gave promise of further discoveries. As he came closer, he was surprised to see a quantity of straw lying at the foot of the steps, an evidence of habitation. With an involuntary gesture, he brought round the hilt of his sword to the front, and advancing close to the straw, uttered an exclamation of surprise.

A human being, whose surroundings and aspect were those of a wild beast, was sitting up, on the edge of the straw, gazing at the cavalier with lack-luster eyes and hanging jaws.

"Who are you, in the name of God, unfortunate creature?" asked the youth, pityingly.

"I am one whose race is nearly run," said the other, in a hollow tone. "Once I was young and gay as you are, but the waters of affliction went over me, and the hand of the Lord marked me out from my fellow-creatures for punishment, because I shed blood. And yet 'twas the blood of a

Only A Mechanic.

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

It was a picture of perfect home comfort that greeted Morris Athelyn's eyes, as, after five years' absence from Applecrest and Millie Danver, he walked up the grassy path to the Danver farm-house. Every thing looked strangely familiar, and he wondered, with a peculiar kind of throbbing at his heart, if Millie was as pretty, as sweet, as when, five years ago, the night before he went away, he had put on her finger an engagement ring. And now he had come back to claim her, after the years of probation.

The wide banner of light that streamed out over the grassy sward through the delicate low drapery, revealed the coziness of the room within; the bright Brussels carpet, the spread tea-table, with its silver and snowy damask; the pictures on the gilt-papered wall, the vases of flowers, and the bronze clock on the black veined marble mantel.

And—there sat Millie Danver, pretty, graceful, dressy Millie, with black eyes, just a trifle bolder than they used to be, and cheeks just a trifle thinner, and around the small, ruby-red mouth an expression that puzzled the lover as he stopped suddenly to look at her he had dreamed of, day and night, for five years of toil for her sake.

It was an expression of discontent, of languid insipidity he was at a loss to account for; an expression that did not make Millie Danver look as fresh and girlish as the winsome smile he had left on her lips.

What did it mean? was it—could it be possible that she was fretting under the restraint of her bonds to him? For a moment Morris Athelyn's heart threatened to suffocate him, so madly did that thought set it to throbbing; and just then, through the open sash, there floated out a peal of gay laughter—Millie's voice he knew it was, and then there came a man's voice, one he had never heard, and then Millie's again.

"Oh, Mr. Easterton." He heard the name distinctly, "Easter-

"Mr. Easterton, my trade ought to be good enough for me. There is a demand for good carpenters everywhere. Millie, I see your father and Hettie coming."

And he abruptly walked out of the room, but not so quickly that he failed to catch a portion of D'Orsay Easterton's consolatory remark to Millie.

"Never mind, dearest, he is nothing but a mechanic—"

Then Morris Athelyn clenched his fists a second, and bit his heavy, brownish-moustached fiercely. Then a smile of scorn came to his blue eyes, and at that very minute Mr. Danver and shy little Hettie Van Vorst met him.

The morning sunshine and the clear western wind came cheerfully at the open windows of the little library that opened off the parlor; and Millie Danver, in a trailing white pique wrapper, heavily braided with white and trimmed with big pearl buttons, looked very pure and cool, as she leaned against the aquarium, carelessly talking to Morris Athelyn.

He was looking very closely at her, wondering if it was the vividness of the pink silk she wore under her collar that made her look so pale.

"I am very sorry," she was saying, in a tone that was half deprecatory and half defiant! "If I had only written and told you, but—but—

"You were ashamed, I suppose, as you are now, to let me know you have rejected me, after five years, for a man who has a better prospect in the world than I. At least, who says he has?"

His lip curled, and then Millie flashed out:

"And he has, too! I am sure if I prefer a mercantile gentleman instead of—of—"

"A common mechanic," he interpolated, still sarcastic.

"Well, yes, if you wish me to mean that," she returned, coolly. "D'Orsay is going with Blanchard, Hoyt & Co., and the prospect is splendid."

Morris smiled again; that queer, mysterious smile that made her so vexed.

"And I like him better, too," she said, angrily, yet with a half glance at his hand.



TON. It was that of a stranger, a gentleman who was evidently not distasteful to the woman he had come all the way from New Orleans to marry.

For a moment he felt giddy with the probable disappointment in store for him; then with all the strength of his brave, sunshiny nature he dashed the incubus off, and boldly entered the room, with a preliminary rap on the door that had brought Millie half-way across the room.

And, after those five years of betrothal, she met him with a little scream of surprise, a shy, coquettish shake of the hand, and a half-blushing glance toward the stylish young man who was looking on from a comfortable stuffed chair in the bay window.

"Why, Millie, dar—"

But Millie interrupted him, hurriedly.

"Mr. Easterton—Mr. Athelyn, a friend of mine from New Orleans. Have you seen papa, yet, Morris?"

And in that first moment of their meeting, that the lover had pictured to himself thousands of times, Morris Athelyn knew this dapper young fellow, with the yellow mustache, had won away Millie from him—who had been true as steel.

There came one sharp, short thrill of agony, that tore remorselessly through every nerve of his body, every chord of his heart, and then—Mr. Easterton's fine soprano voice addressed him:

"From New Orleans, eh? Fine place that, Mr.—Mr.—beg pardon; I must have missed the name."

Millie blushed and repeated it, while Morris bowed coldly at the concealed sympathy.

"Ah, Athelyn—Mr. Athelyn. The name is not familiar to me, but perhaps you could be service to me in giving me some little information—but I hardly presume you to be acquainted with the leading cotton firms in New Orleans?"

Mr. Easterton glanced at Morris's rough traveling suit—plain tweed it was. Morris smiled grimly.

"The leading cotton men are very rich men, Mr. Easterton." Easterton smiled, delightedly.

"Yes, I know—you see I expect to sail for New Orleans, as corresponding clerk for the biggest house there—Blanchard, Hoyt & Co. Know 'em?"

"I've heard of them," said Morris, thoughtfully. "A very wealthy firm they say. Well, cotton's a good thing, Mr. Easterton; I've no doubt you'll make your fortune."

He glanced at Millie, and as their eyes met, her cheeks grew crimson. Ah, already she was interested in D'Orsay Easterton's chances of success.

"Oh, yes, of course," returned the young fellow, blithely. "Of course I'll get on, fast; only, if cotton's so sure, why don't you—"

Morris quietly interrupted him.

some, bronzed, bearded face. Possibly she thought of D'Orsay Easterton's faint shadow of yellow goose-down.

"Oh!" then Morris turned away suddenly.

"If that is the case, Miss Danver, from this hour we are free."

And he never looked back at her as she flitted out the bay window, but marched straight into the next room, where, in the darkness, he almost ran over Hettie Van Vorst—little orphan Hettie, whom he had rocked in her cradle when he was a boy of twelve.

"How stupid of me! I beg a thousand pardons, my dear little girl, what are you crying about?"

He had opened a shutter, and turned to Hettie, whose face fair, with its tender, pansy-purple eyes, and dainty, scarlet mouth, all bore traces of tears.

"Oh, Morris! indeed I didn't mean to hear; but I couldn't get out, and when she treated you so—so mean—oh, I think it's awful!"

He had smiled at first, as he drew her down on the sofa beside him; but the smile vanished before her sweet, girlish sympathy.

"So you would not go back on a fellow like me, Hettie?" and he smoothed her soft, brown hair, with a strange stirring at his heart as he touched it.

"I think it's awful," she repeated; "to think how you must feel to be disappointed and, so suddenly, and for such a reason!"

She slipped her tiny hand in his big palm, and then Morris would not let it go.

"Well," he said, slowly, after a moment of silence, as his eyes began to brighten and lighten: "well, Hettie, I am very glad to hear; but I couldn't get out, and when she treated you so—so mean—oh, I think it's awful!"

Hettie opened her eyes, in mute astonishment.

"You're not?"

"No; because therefore you pity me, and pity is akin to love; little comforter. And I want you to love me, and marry me, and go back to my Southern home as my little Northern bride."

He stooped and took her in his arms, never giving her a chance to refuse him.

"Oh, Morris, it is so strange, so sudden—but—but—"

He kissed away the words.

"I can not be disappointed again, you know," he said.

"If you please," said Mr. D'Orsay Easterton, as he handed a letter to a solemn-faced clerk, in the immense counting-room of Blanchard, Hoyt & Co.'s cotton warehouse.

The clerk read the unsealed letter, added a memorandum, and rung a hand-bell, that was answered by a call-boy.

"Show this gentleman to Mr. Athelyn's office."

And, without the slightest recollection of the name, D'Orsay Easterton was formally ushered into the presence of Morris Athelyn, the "Co." of the great firm who had hired Millie Danver's lover for their corresponding clerk.

"Why—oh!—why—" D'Orsay began, confusedly, but Morris bowed very pleasantly.

"Mr. Easterton, I am glad you are so punctual. I hope you will like us, and New Orleans Forester, show Mr. Easterton his desk. By the way, Easterton, call and see us—400 Pontchartrain Avenue. I think Hettie would be glad to see a friend from the North."

D'Orsay bowed, dumbly; wasn't it singular, anyhow? Surely he had thought that plain, homely-looking man a mechanic; instead, here he was his employer, and one of the richest men in Louisiana.

What would Millie say when she found that he had refused the master for the servant? D'Orsay Easterton didn't care to dwell on that question; and still more doubtful was the solving of it, when, a few days later, he walked past 400 Pontchartrain Avenue—a magnificent residence, and saw Hettie Athelyn assisted into her